

*Requires full disclosure of risks before seizure of private land*

WASHINGTON – Today, U.S. Representative Mike Quigley offered an amendment to the Private Property Rights Protection Act of 2011 (H.R. 1433) to provide greater disclosure and transparency before the construction of oil and gas pipelines.

“The public wants, and deserves, to know how a proposed pipeline in their backyard would affect them, their family, their health and their local economy,” said Rep. Quigley during consideration of his amendment. “This amendment simply says that before local governments seize private land in the name of economic development or rush through the environmental permitting process, they must at least acknowledge the risks that come with it. It is unconscionable to allow governments to take private land and place communities at risk without at least coming clean about what those risks are in the first place.”

Rep. Quigley’s amendment was offered during a markup in the House Committee on the Judiciary. It would require the issuance of a publicly-available environmental impact report before a pipeline could be considered exempt from classification as economic development for eminent domain purposes.

Under this amendment, only “qualified pipelines” would be exempt from classification for economic development purposes. A pipeline would only be considered qualified after the local environmental authority has considered the cumulative greenhouse gas emissions impacts of the pipeline over a 50-year timeframe, whether the existing pipeline capacity is adequate, and the impacts of the project on minority and low-income populations - and only after those findings have been furnished to the public with ample time for review.

A majority of the Committee on the Judiciary voted against the Quigley Amendment on a voice vote. Quigley intends to continue pursuing the issue as the legislation moves forward.

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